

A FEW THOUGHTS

On the Veto and the Constitution.

The first "Reform Legislature" has come and gone. The Supreme Court has announced its decision respecting the constitutionality of the law of September 25th, 1887, organizing a Supreme Court of not less than three Judges. The Legislature was the offspring of Revolution, which was caused by the ruinous prodigality and bad administration of both the executive and legislative branches of the former government. The people saw that without a change they were rapidly hastening to national ruin, and that the loss of independence through misadministration would bring widespread private and public disaster. They resolved upon a change, and as this could not be brought about under the existing Constitution they determined to set it aside, as well as the ruling powers, as far as it was necessary to accomplish their object.

Resolutions, reciting their wants were prepared and ratified by a public meeting held June 30th, 1887. The people demanded that the government should be conducted upon principles of "rigid economy in every department,"—that provision should be made for the payment of the national debt,—that all unnecessary offices be abolished,—that excessive salaries be curtailed, and that the King do not meddle with politics. The King accepted the ultimatum from the people, and a new constitution was prepared, intended to secure to the people every concession made by the King, without question, intended to secure the rights of the people and good government by a responsible cabinet, under the control of a legislature of their own choosing. There was no misunderstanding their wants and determination. They determined to build a government upon the admirable platform that has been published,—that all debts should be paid, and all useless naval and military expenses and embassies and offices and pensions should be discontinued,—that all expenses should be proportioned to the work to be performed,—that if governors were not needed, the office should be abolished,—if but three judges were needed, there should not be five, and that three should be rigid economy based on competency and integrity, such as prevailed after Dr. Judd took charge of the finances in September, 1842. He found a government without organization deeply involved in debt, which he left, eleven years later, fully organized, with many public improvements, and sixty thousand dollars in the treasury. During most of this time the King received from the treasury \$12,000 per annum; ministers \$3,000 and subordinates proportionally lower, and the taxes were one fourth of one per cent.

The people meant that the expenses of the government should be measured by its necessities, and the services to be rendered by the work to be done, and that the King should be placed beyond the reach of temptation from politics. This was what was intended to be done, and the constitution was intended to make this so plain that it could not be questioned by the learned or the unlearned. The Legislature, in conformity, as it supposed, to the wishes of the people, and the principles of the platform, introduced bills to abolish the office of Governor and reorganize the Supreme Court. The King, by Article 48, claimed the right of veto, without the sanction of his Cabinet, of the former, notwithstanding the prohibitions of Articles 41 and 78, and the Supreme Court has pronounced the latter unconstitutional. If correct, thus frustrating the intentions of the people in two very important particulars, the political action of the King, and the reduction of officers in the Supreme Court to their necessary requirements. The non-necessity of governors, of four Cabinet Ministers, of the large military and naval expenses, have long since been spoken of, and of the Judges, by themselves, prior to the law of September 25th, 1887. And thus the want of certainty, in the language of the constitution interferes with the reasonable wishes and will of the people. Those wishes are for an economical and upright government; and some believe that twelve senators or nobles, and twelve elected commoners, for legislators, would be as efficient, do the work as well, and be more economical than the present assembly, and that it will be well to so amend the present constitution as to have it represent the principles of the admirable platform of the people which it does not unquestionably do.

Natural History Note.—The brain of an elephant is somewhat larger than that of a man, but the trunk of an elephant is considerably smaller than that of a woman.—(Lowell Courier.)

Jeems (high muck-a-muck to H. H. H.)—Two H'm'ian gents 'boutside your Roy's 'Ighness.
H. R. H.—Names, Jeems.
Jeems—Mr. Gould an' Mr. Sullivan.
H. R. H.—Tell Mr. Gould that I've gone to the Highlands, and show Mr. Sullivan in.

LEPROSY IN EUROPE.

The Disease Being Gradually Propagated by Chinese Emigrants.

The warning voice uttered by the doctor of Greatham, in the *Times*, as to the spread of leprosy, brings us face to face with a terrible danger, as little understood or experienced by Englishmen as is the black death or the sweating sickness. To most of us leprosy is happily only a name, associated mainly with Scriptural incidents which seem scarcely more remote from ourselves than the disease itself. Yet there can be no doubt that this maldy, one of the most hideous that afflicts mankind, is actually among us at this moment, that its tendency is to keep a firm foothold wherever it shows itself, and that it is constantly widening the area of its dreadful influence.

According to Archdeacon Wright, the disease is being spread all over the world by Chinese emigrants. They have carried it to California, New Brunswick, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Sandwich Islands, where it was previously unknown; and either they have brought it into Europe themselves or it has been brought by Europeans who have been in contact with them. All the specialists in skin diseases in Paris are said to have lepers among their patients—soldiers, sailors, merchants, sisters of charity and others. Epidemics of leprosy have broken out in more than one of the provinces of Spain, the disease having been brought home by sailors. There are lepers in the hospitals of London, Dublin and Glasgow, and Archdeacon Wright mentions, on authority he does not doubt, that a week or two ago there was a case of leprosy in an English village. In fact, the two points to be borne in mind are themselves sufficiently suggestive of grounds of alarm, the first being that the disease itself has of late years increased in activity, and the second that, in more or less degree, it is to be found all over the world. Any accidental circumstance which might develop its virulence would at once produce a world-wide epidemic. The train is laid and needs only to be fired.—(St. James' Budget.)

Liquor and Aborigines.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishop of London have addressed an encyclical letter to the bishops of the Church of England throughout the world, directing their attention to the widespread and increasing evils caused by the introduction of intoxicating liquors among the native races in the colonies and dependencies of the British Empire and in other countries to which British trade has access. It is indirectly suggested that possibly the colonial prelates may have the means of influencing the local legislatures to check the growing evil, and it is pointed out that, at any rate, they can do much to form public opinion on this grave question. Whatever steps they might adopt they could confidently count upon the warmest and most earnest sympathy of those who addressed them in their efforts to check a serious difficulty.

Earl De La Warr has indirectly attempted to support the Archbishops and the Bishop of London by asking the representative of the Colonial office in the House of Lords whether any steps were being taken to promote an international understanding, with the view of preventing the sale of intoxicating spirits to the natives of the Western Pacific Islands. He made a brief speech on the subject, in which he declared that colonial Governors would admit that the trade in intoxicating spirits had been the source of great evil to the natives, and had hindered, if not in some instances neutralized, efforts which had been made in the cause of civilization. The Earl of Onslow replied that the Government was alive to the danger of allowing the trade in intoxicating liquors, arms and ammunition in the Western Pacific, and had endeavored to arrange an international agreement on the subject, but the attitude of the Government of the United States had caused the abandonment of the scheme. No agreement existed between England and Germany on the subject, but each nation prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquors in its own colonies and protected territories in the Western Pacific.—Ex.

Wallace Rose and George Bubear have signed articles to row for the championship of England and \$1000 a side. The race will be contested on February 13 over the Thames course.

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